

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I think it would be a tremendous mistake to disallow independent ISPs to provide DSL over the telephone company's wires. In my personal experience, the telephone monopoly tells me I cannot have DSL in my office, because they do not provide it; however, I do get the service from an independent ISP. That proves that, even in the face of fair market competition, the telephone monopoly is not willing to provide customers what they want. I can only imagine how poor their service would be if they did not have competition.

Interestingly, I have DSL provided by the telephone company at my home, although I have no choice but to get the service from an independent ISP in my office. Therefore, I can offer first-hand comparisons of the difference in service levels. The telephone company's service is abhorrent (I am planning to change my home service, because the telephone company's DSL constantly goes down for no reason), they required me to spend hundreds of dollars to buy their special DSL modem, they also required me to pay a few hundred dollars for initial set-up, and they have never once answered the help line when I have called. Meanwhile, the independent ISP created a clever infrastructure, so that all I had to do was order the service, plug in my modem, and then - as if by magic - the DSL worked and worked flawlessly. Since then, I have called the help line to get advice on how best to use the service and every time my phone call was answered quickly and I was given a clear and workable answer.

If the telephone company provided a competitive service, they would not have to resort to monopoly tactics like keeping other vendors away from the lines infrastructure. If that ever happens, I may change my mind, but now I think it would be a serious and inexcusable mistreatment of the consumer to allow the telephone company to restrict access to the lines that public consumers' years of phone fees have paid to put in place.

Sincerely,

david handmaker  
suite 476, 4010 dupont circle  
louisville, KY 40207